

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4167

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2982

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, ET, SY

SUBJ: ERITREAN RELIEF COMMITTEE AND ELF DELEGATION VISIT
DAMASCUS

1. DAMASCUS NEWSPAPER AL-THAWRA AUGUST 2 DEVOTED MAJOR ARTICLE TO VISIT OF ERITREAN RELIEF COMMITTEE WHICH IT STATED HAD BEEN FORMED AFTER "SECOND NATIONALIST CONFERENCE HELD IN LIBERATED ERITREAN TERRITORY."

2. DELEGATION CONSISTED OF COMMITTEE PRESIDENT, DR. HAITI TSFAMARIAM, AND MEMBERS, DR. MEXINA WLIHANS AND MUHAMMAD ADA. THEY TOLD PRESS OF "SAVAGE EXTERMINATION" LAUNCHED BY GOE AGAINST ERITREAN PEOPLE RESULTING IN DESTRUCTION OF 120 VILLAGES AND CREATION OF 800,000 ERITREAN REFUGEES OF WHOM 100,000 FLED TO EASTERN BORDERS OF SUDAN AND 700,000 TO LIBERATED AREAS.

3. COMMITTEE PRESIDENT DESCRIBED DISASTROUS SITUATION REFUGEES NOTING THAT ADDIS AUTHORITIES HAD INTERCEPTED AID SENT BY WORLD RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS. COMMITTEE WAS VISITING ARAB AND EUROPEAN STATES TO PRESENT FACTS AND REQUEST IMMEDIATE RELIEF. IT PRAISED LONG STANDING ASSISTANCE GIVEN BY SYRIAN MEDIA IN EXPLAINING BASIS FOR ERITREAN
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REVOLUTION.

4. ASKED BY CORRESPONDENT RE US AND ISRAEL ROLE IN RE-EQUIPING ETHIOPIAN MILITARY REGIME AGAINST ERITREAN STRUGGLE. COMMITTEE PRESIDENT ANSWERED THAT FOLLOWING SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PLEDGE FOR CONTINUED US-ADDIS FRIENDSHIP LARGE QUANTITY OF US ARMS STARTED TO ARRIVE. WHILE ANNOUNCED VALUE OF ARMS IS OVER \$30 MILLION, THEIR TRUE VALUE PROBABLY EXCEEDS \$100 MILLION. ERITREAN REVOLUTINARIES, HE ADDED HAD SEIZED ARMS FROM ADDIS FORCES OF ISRAELI MANUFACTURE.

5. AUGUST 4 PRESS REPORTED ARRIVAL IN DAMASCUS OF ELF DELEGATION HEADED BY AHMAD NASSER, PRESIDENT OF THE FRONT'S REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL TOGETHER WITH COUNCIL MEMBER ZAYN AL-YASIN. THEY WERE REPORTEDLY INVITED HERE TO BRIEF BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND ON LATEST ERITREAN DEVELOPMENTS.
MURPHY

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NNN

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